

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COX of California. Mr. Speaker, as our colleagues know, we have done our job here. We did it last summer. We passed all our appropriations bills.

The truth is that the President has now vetoed appropriations bills that would keep our parks open, appropriations bills that would keep our prisons and the guards paid. We passed not only a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, by a two-thirds vote here, which would have kicked in in 7 years, but failing the one vote necessary to get a two-thirds margin for a constitutional amendment in the Senate, we, the House and Senate together, passed the Balanced Budget Act to balance the budget in 7 years, and the President has vetoed that.

Then we passed a resolution that the President signed that said you, Mr. President, will come up with a balanced budget, scored by the CBO, in 7 years, and he has not done that.

There is a good reason that now we have this seeming impasse. It is that the President has not done his job. We will continue to do ours and we will balance the budget.

REPUBLICANS HOLDING GOVERNMENT HOSTAGE

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, when I was home in New Jersey the last week and in my district office, I received many calls on a regular basis from Government employees, some of whom were almost in tears because they have not been able to pay their rent, pay their mortgage, creditors are calling upon them, and there really was not a great deal we could do.

I naively expected when I came here today that because the Senate had moved a continuing resolution that would reopen the Government, and because the President supported it, that we would take that continuing resolution up today, but we did not.

The only thing I can say is that finally we know where the blame is. The blame is with the House Republican leadership and those Republicans that they represent here in the House who want to keep the Government shut down, who want to hold the American people, the Government workers and the taxpayers who are paying for services they should be getting, hostage to their own ideology about what the budget priorities should be.

I have said from the very beginning that is not the way to operate.

REPUBLICANS READY TO PASS A BALANCED BUDGET

(Mr. TAUZIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TAUZIN. Mr. Speaker, to hear the rhetoric in this debate one would

think that most of the Government is shut down. That is not true. Most of the Government is up and running.

It is about one-fifth of the Government that is not open for business today. And most of that one-fifth could be open for business today if the President had simply signed 3 appropriations bills the House and the Senate, representing a majority of the American people, sent to him in time for him to put his signature on it and to put these people to work. The President chose not to sign those bills and so most of that one-fifth of the work force is out of work today. As to that remaining number, they are tied up in a filibuster on the Senate side led by Members of the President's own party.

So if you want to know why part of the Government is shut down today, it is because the President failed to sign the appropriation bills the House and Senate agreed upon, and because his own party has the final remaining appropriation bills tied up in the Senate in a filibuster. We are ready to go to work, pass a balanced budget bill for this country and get us on a course to fiscal sanity again.

FRESHMAN REPUBLICANS HOLD GOVERNMENT HOSTAGE

(Mr. TORRES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, that is true, that the Government is not totally shut down, but most of it is shut down and today Federal workers, joined by senior citizens and others, will take to the street to protest. They are going to picket the houses and the offices of the 73 freshman Republicans who are holding the Government hostage.

Yes, nearly 760,000 Federal employees are either furloughed or working without pay. This is having a calamitous effect across the country, and impacting not only our economy but individual Americans alike. We are told that 12 States have already advised the agency for Health and Human Services that 600,000 seniors in the next 2 weeks will probably not receive Meals on Wheels nor have adequate transportation. That is simply disgraceful.

Ladies and gentlemen, we ask those 73 Members and our Republican leadership to let this Government go back to work.

A SIMPLE SOLUTION TO BUDGET IMPASSE

(Mr. BONO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BONO. Mr. Speaker, this place cracks me up sometimes. I sometimes feel like I walk through a mirror and I am going to meet the Mad Hatter. We hear bleeding heart after bleeding heart. We hear all these stories.

It is this simple. The President said he would sign a contract to balance the

budget in 7 years, scored by CBO. We said fine. If you do that, there is no problem, we will keep going, and Government will be open.

Now the President has not done that, so all the rest of this rhetoric is rhetoric. As soon as the President decides to keep his word, that is what has got to be understood, Mr. Speaker, is that he has to keep his word, and his word was that he would sign a balanced budget scored by CBO. I hope he keeps his word soon.

PRESIDENT HAS PROBLEM WITH BALANCED BUDGET

(Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I too, as my colleague from Illinois, offer condolences to the Fazio family and to the Johnson family.

Mr. Speaker, on November 20 there was a continuing resolution that was signed that said that Congress and the President shall balance the budget by the year 2002, using Congressional Budget Office numbers and using honest numbers. That resolution expired December 15 at midnight. At that time, the President had not offered a balanced budget, scored by CBO, that would balance in 7 years.

Mr. Speaker, that has been the problem. We have had appropriations that have been vetoed. We do not have a President that submitted a budget that would balance over the next 7 years, and that is the problem. What is the problem with submitting something that will balance? Is it that the President does not want to be accountable, the President does not want to discipline himself?

We said, "Mr. President, you don't have to agree with our numbers. You can disagree with our numbers. Just give us your priority, your numbers, and we will negotiate a settlement."

TIME TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY IN BUDGET BATTLE

(Mr. REED asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, the leader of the other body is right, enough is enough. For 19 days much of the Federal Government has been closed through the failure and intransigence of the new House leadership.

Federal workers and their families are the most obvious victims of this hostage mentality. They are not the only ones suffering. At Rhode Island's VA medical center employees are already working with either half or no pay, and now the veterans' benefits are threatened because the VA continuing resolution expires today.

Moreover, by the end of the week Rhode Island will have no funds left to administer its unemployment compensation insurance program, which